31: Jones E-5 (1967-1970) 1972 N06 Comanche N06
Oklahoma

The madstone, or medicine bone was used for wounds, infections, boils, and pains. It was a small piece of leg bone of the giant prehistoric mammoth believed by the Comanches to be the bones of *piamɔmpits*—the cannibal owl. Placed over the affected spot, it was supposed to draw out the poison. 756 755 237

Sanapia offers the following description of what *piamupits* was supposed to have looked like. 756 755 825

> It look like a man . . . big, old monster. They said it got a face like a man. It's got hair all over its body and it got big feet. It's tall, you know. They die of old age, I guess. They be way out there somewhere and just sit there and die. Just after awhile dirt just covering them up, and they go under ground like that. That's where they find this medicine up to today.

Sanapia grinds this medicine, which she calls "bone medicine," into a powder and mixes it with water to form a dilute medicinal solution. She sometimes simply wets the piece of bone and applies it to the afflicted area of the body. Bone medicine is used to strengthen bones and is especially effective in the treatment of sprains. Sanapia does not mention its use in the treatment of boils, wounds, or infections. 756 755 237 278

The Bible

Sanapia carries a Bible with her most of the time, and it is always present when she doctors. Before beginning treatment she holds the Bible in both hands before her and prays for power. 756 755 779

> I really read bible lots, and I go by the bible when I'm doctoring too. I always ask God to give power to my hands and mind. I pray hard to the Holy Ghost. I learned that bible while I was at Cache Creek school. My mother didn't go by the bible when she doctoring, but I do, because you got to ask God for help sometimes.

Medicine Feather

Sanapia's Medicine feather is the tail feather from a golden eagle. She employs it in every case she doctors, and of all the items which she carries when she doctors, this is the most revered. The feather is used to ceremonially "fan" her patient at various points during the course of treatment and as a general prop in her doctoring performances. It is always cedared before and after use. 756 755 237 825 778

"Fanning" is an act of blessing as well as a strictly curative act when performed by Sanapia. When it is being used as a tool in the doctoring procedure, she employs the feather to waft the smoke from certain smoldering medicines over her patient. At times though, during treatment and always immediately after treatment, Sanapia lightly taps the patient with her Medicine feather around the face and head, making four passes over the face and forehead and four passes over the back of the head. She then taps four times on each arm with a fanning motion. This is proceeded by four fanlike taps on the chest and back and four

31: Jones E-5 (1967-1970) 1972 NO6 Comanche NO6
Oklahoma

various power sources for the task at hand. She deposits some cedar on the coals and smokes her Medicine feather by lightly waving it through the rising smoke four times. She then lays her feather on the fragment of Mexican sarape, which also underlies the medicines she will use, and holds her hands in the medicine smoke. With a washing motion, she draws the smoke over her face, arms, chest, and legs. After she "cleanses" herself with the smoke, she takes her feather and ceremonially fans her patient.

She then takes her Bible between her palms and, extending her arms before her, she prays to "God and Jesus and especially the Holy Ghost" to assist her in healing her patient. If she is inspired to do so, she will sometimes open her Bible at random and read from it in an attempt to receive a sign from "God, Jesus, or the Holy Ghost" concerning the direction she should take in her doctoring, or the possible outcome of her treatment.

Next, Sanapia picks up her Chief Peyote, and holding it in her right hand, she speaks to it. As mentioned in the chapter on medicines, Sanapia will usually threaten the peyote rather than beseech it or pray to it when she uses it in dotcoring. As she talks to it, she will transfer it from hand to hand in order to draw the power it possesses into her hands.

After Sanapia has made her opening prayers, she is in a very agitated emotional condition. This is mentioned both by Sanapia and by some of her expatients. She considers the chills, shaking, and trembling that she experiences as signs that her power has entered her, and she will not begin to doctor until she reaches this state.

> And when I pray like that . . . well, that power just come over me, comes down and gives me that chills and I start shaking all at once and pretty soon it goes away and then I start. Sometimes I can't hardly touch them, the way my hand be shaking. It makes me feel like that power wants to make me get them well right now.

When she has regained control of her hands after the siege of trembling, Sanapia begins the treatment proper. She takes a segment of the white root of *bekwinatsu* and masticates it to a moist pulp. She then spews it over the patient's face, head, and arms if they have been affected by the ghost contagion. She also takes this moist pulp, and, after rolling it between her palms, she rubs it over the areas of the patient's body which exhibit symptoms of ghost sickness. After so doing, she deposits this premasticated root in the patient's mouth and instructs him to to swallow it.

Sanapia then chews another piece of *bekwinatsu* together with a few leaves of sweet sage to sweeten her mouth and, retaining this concoction in her mouth, applies her mouth to the contorted areas of the patient's face to suck out the sickness. Although she has the option of utilizing her sucking horn in other cases, she is obliged to use her mouth in the doctoring of ghost sickness.

Her mouth and hands are the areas of her body which are believed to be especially charged with power. This is the rationale for the spewing of medicines on a patient, the administering of medicines which have been premasticated by